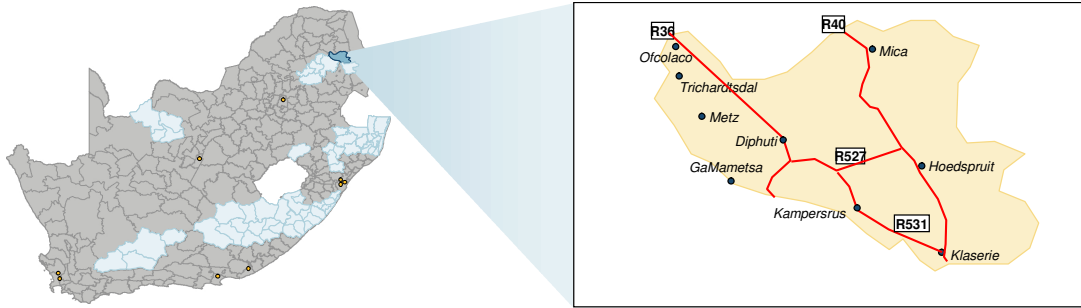


Economic snapshot: Maruleng, Limpopo



Base data (Based on the Stats SA 2001 Census, unless indicated otherwise)

<i>Population</i>	94,382	<i>Rural population</i>	98%
<i>Employment rate</i>	28% (average for rural nodes: 15%; average for SA: 33%)	<i>Min Grade 12 education</i>	16% of population aged 20+
<i>Potential labour pool*</i>	56% of total population	<i>Access to electricity</i>	41% of households (average for rural nodes: 43%; average for SA: 70%)
<i>GDP per capita</i>	R10,140 (Quantec)		

* Percentage population aged 15 to 64

Private sector performance: Key sector overview

<i>Agriculture</i>	Agriculture is the dominant economic activity in terms of employment and land use. Large-scale commercial agriculture exists mainly in citrus, mangos and vegetables for the export market. A temperate climate, fertile soil and abundant water from the Blyde and Oliphants rivers make the node conducive to farming. Scope exists for expansion (including alternative crops) and processing activities. In the rural settlements, agriculture remains largely at a subsistence or small-scale food-production level. Key challenges for sector growth include the resolution of land claims, effective capacitation of new land owners and the expansion of the irrigation network.
<i>Tourism</i>	Maruleng has significant tourism assets including natural beauty ranging from the Blyde River Canyon to wildlife in the Timbavati. The area is home to one of the largest concentrations of exclusive private game lodges in the country, is a key destination for luxury trains, an important point of entry to the Kruger and Limpopo Transfrontier parks, and has its own airport with an international licence. Major activity is occurring around Hoedspruit with the development of residential game estates.
<i>Retail</i>	Retail is currently limited to Hoedspruit but is currently undergoing significant expansion with the construction of a 90,000m ² shopping centre. Retail will continue to be driven mainly by demand from tourism activities and the mushrooming of residential estates. A key opportunity is the establishment of a retail node in the densely populated Sekororo area to service the majority of the node's population.

Public sector performance: General observations

- The recent municipal re-demarcation and demobilisation of the Bohlabela district municipality have resulted in capacity and institutional challenges for the Maruleng municipality.
- Cooperation between Maruleng and the Mopani district municipality and the Limpopo government and its departments is improving. Of concern is the neglect of economic and other linkages with Bushbuckridge.
- A key challenge remains better alignment of the Maruleng IDP with the Mopani IDP and the Limpopo Growth and Development Strategy (GDS). Maruleng also needs a sound spatial development framework and LED strategy.

Opportunities to facilitate economic growth

Specific investment opportunities

Expansion of agricultural activity	Rehabilitation of citrus farms	Silk production
Juice-processing plant	Stone crushing and quarrying	Eastgate Airport expansion
Sugar to ethanol plant	Expansion of tourism marketing and development of a cultural village	Government centre in Sekororo

General actions

- Focus on continued basic service delivery to the underdeveloped parts of the node. In particular, water and sewer services in Hoedspruit need to be addressed in the short term.
- Draw up a spatial development framework to manage unsustainable development (e.g. urban expansion in Hoedspruit), and to ensure that the municipality derives increased income from local economic activity.
- Develop a sound LED strategy to align Mopani's LED with Limpopo's GDS and Spatial Development Framework (SDF).
- Resolve land claims speedily to prevent unnecessary disruption of agricultural production.
- Coordinate and promote tourism more effectively.